

The Gathering Growth Guide

We are Family // Part 2 // Family means we're connected

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Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring with a break from Community Groups during the. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family as you prepare to attend your Community Group.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN YOU COME TO GROUP HAVING PREPARED WITH THIS GUIDE!!

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

As we learned last week in Part 1 of the "We are Family" series, all of us want to be accepted. But what happens after that? Is there more to family than just being accepted? Absolutely, and it all starts with being connected, because family provides one of the strongest and most unique connections of any institution. If being accepted provides the place, then being connected provides the power that takes us to greater levels in our faith.

1. **We're connected to power achieving great things in us.** Acts 1:8 refers to the Spirit's power as "dunamis" power (and so do a lot of other verses after that one). That's the word that our word dynamite comes from, so being connected to the Holy Spirit is like being connected to a 220-volt cable! When we're connected to the power of God, we get energy, and Ephesians 3:20 assures us that the dynamite power of the Holy Spirit is able to achieve great things in us – even greater than we could have imagined!
2. **We're connected to people believing great things with us.** Not only does the power of the Holy Spirit give us energy, but it gets even better than that! When we double that by being connected to the people of God (who are also connected to the power of God), we get synergy! That's a fancy word that means "1+1 can equal more than 2" because the power of God in you plus the power of God in me leads to greater than we could have ever done on our own. It's good to be connected!
3. **Troubleshooting poor connections.** Obviously, connections don't work if we aren't plugged in, so if we're living a life of no power, it's safe to say we're in the room (accepted) but not plugged in (connected). But is it possible to be plugged in but still lack the power of connection? As we saw in the clip from "Christmas Vacation," the answer is yes.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- As you've thought back through this week's message, what one thing – if any – inspired you or maybe even confused you?
- Have you ever experienced a loss of power in your home? What was it like? How does being without power help highlight the importance of having power?
- What about spiritually? What happens when we try to live for God in our own power? Have you ever tried to do that? Read Galatians 2:19-21 and discuss what Paul found when he tried to do things in his own power.
- Sometimes, we don't really understand the full capacity of the dunamis power in us, do we? We're like a race car driver who never gets past 2nd gear! That's why Paul prayed the prayer found in Ephesians 1:19. What did he want the Ephesians to understand? What did that power do for Jesus (vv. 20-22)? What can it do for us (v. 23)?
- Paul mentioned 4 "switches" that can close us to the power that we need to be connected to: the Bible, prayer, worship and fellowship. Which of these do you tend to turn off the most? How can remembering what God has done for you help these become less duty and more devotion?